towards the south-north are as lustrous as ebony."

To be candid, however, subsequently we have something like a definition of the term "art," "that which lies in the design of beauty for the production of pleasure." *Pro hac vice*, we accept the definition; but every one must see that in putting forward this expression, Mr. Kerr condenses his "etherial essence;" his abstraction becomes something tangible; his "integer of thought" is converted into an integer of matter; we have something which could have no visible existence except in connection with the material on which the mind has been exercised. Indeed, as Mr. Kerr advances he comes down from the eminence of pure abstraction, and in referring to the designs of the ancients he observes, very justly, "that the intellect of man in those days being freer in our peculiar province than now, and more under the action of the true principles of judgment, which lie in nature and reason alone —design proceeded more in the natural way, and following nature in exact adherence to fact (no sham, no concealment), and obeying reason in having no standard of criticism but abstract rationality of *means and ends, purpose and expression*—no misappropriations, no misapplications, no subversions, no Nelson columns, *no stone proportions in iron*, no architecture applied to machinery,—the human mind produced of necessity works rightly principled," &c. Now what is all this but asserting, and asserting well, that design—fine art in architecture,—to be successful, must have immediate reference to the object and purpose of the design, and to the material in which the design is to be carried out. What, then, becomes of the "segregation of the fine art architecture," "the perfect separateness of art from its mere adjuncts," and the theory of the "etherial essence" which has preceded? Our art is essentially connected with, even dependent upon, the materials on which it has to be exercised. In this respect architecture differs materially from the sister arts of poetry, painting, and sculpture. In them, Nature is the inexhaustible fountain direct from which they draw their inspiration and beauty. There does not exist in the whole range of these arts a beauty of expression, the portraiture of an emotion or passion, which has not its prototype in the world around. The connection of architecture with nature is only of a secondary class. We draw from nature our ideas of strength or weakness, harmony and proportion; but these ideas, so derived, exist as abstract principles, more or less strong as the mind has been cultivated in this direction, and are applied instinctively to the particular instances presented to us; to these is superadded that knowledge, which every one gains from experience, of the fitness or otherwise of certain materials for certain purposes. There is also the perception of the beauty of form derived primarily from nature, but existing also innate in every mind in a greater or less degree. It is then with these principles in their application to the raw material with which he has to deal, that the architect has to do; but in so dealing with them he is further confined by precedent and custom to certain systems or modes, which, like corks to the swimmer, may uphold the unskilful, but may operate as trammels to the daring and bold. It surely does not require much argument to prove that under these circumstances it is scarcely possible for the art of architecture to exist in an abstract form. What gave the peculiar characteristics to the trabeated and columned architecture of the Greeks, to the arcaded masses of the Romans, to the aspiring and taper structures of the middle ages, but the material with which they had to construct and carry out their designs? Every one practically admits the force of this. How satisfied is our sense of proportion and fitness when we see every kind of material employed about a building openly avowing its own honest character. The stone really stone, not stucco or iron painted to imitate it; iron employed where lightness and strength are requisite, a due proportion observed between the piers and apertures. If a building is erected in granite, we do not look for the same delicacy of mouldings and elaborate design as we might expect were Caen or Bath stone employed. If brick be the material used, vaults and arches naturally suggest themselves as principal features in the structure. To talk then of design, of fine art architecture as a pure abstraction, having no reference to the material employed, we again repeat, must lead to serious error and gross inconsistency.

"The contriving of plans," says Mr. Kerr, has nothing to do with "pure art, in which style has its being."

In most structures, the plan is usually first arranged, and has of itself, in all styles, dictated to a considerable extent the mode of construction, the material employed, and the nature of the embellishment. The Pantheon, the Greek temple, the Roman Basilica, the Byzantine churches, the middle age cathedral, are all familiar instances, in which plan and arrangement have materially, indeed essentially, modified the design of the exterior. It would be about as consistent in erecting a house to begin by fixing the roof, as in designing one to commence by preparing the elevation or exterior design, except in certain cases of terraces and streets, familiar to every architect. We will not further enlarge on the subject, as indeed lengthened argument would be thrown away where all that is necessary is a simple reference to the whole history of architecture and to its present practice.

We trust that Mr. Kerr may be induced to rein in his fiery charger, and descend to the quieter though safer region of plain practice, in which we heartily wish him all possible success.

P.

THE ARMY AND NAVY CLUB COMPETITION.

SIR,—If we may judge by the applause which the art of copying elicits, we ought immediately to shun all attempts at improvement, as innovation. Camdenists appear to have set a worthy example, and established a creed which the supple spirits of the present age are too happy to follow,—nay, conceive it rank heterodoxy to doubt,—and whether ecclesiastic or layman, Goth or anti-Goth, still the universal faith in architecture, and that which marks the nineteenth century as widely different from preceding periods, is the mathematical precision and delicate exactness in which ancient or medieval art is reproduced; the displacement of a column, or the alteration of an entablature; a deviation in the form of a church, or the non-conformity to the triple rule for the east window of the chancel, are all such violations of orthodox principles as *now* established, that he is a bold man who dares to think for himself; as if our venerable forefathers had possessed themselves of all past, present, and future thoughts,—swamped the intellects of ages to come, as well as laid violent embargo upon all ideas which might have existed previous to those wonderful periods which form the *ne plus ultra* of all art. Poor architecture appears to have got into a terrible fix; its career is terminated, and it presents the curious anomaly of art, which continues to be practised, having come to an impassable full stop, at the beginning as well as at the end of her existence:—all before as well as all after this orthodoxy is—*nil, nil*.

It would be in vain for me to recount the marvellous re-productions of the great geniuses of the present day in the noble art which they practise with such intense application—to their books; it would be in vain to attempt such a list,—it would swell to an enormous bulk. A great work has just now been uncovered to the vulgar gaze,—the new part of the Carlton Club house, with its polished granite columns, its gigantic entablature,—of course in strict proportion,—the whole most elaborately copied by the talented architect from a building by Sansovino. Ill-natured people will say that the casts from the original assisted the masons, in some small degree, in producing the perfect similarity to the great original, and that the mental labour of the reviver was greatly diminished thereby. But who will dare to criticise so perfect a copy? If, indeed, there had been any freaks of fancy, any attempts at original or poetic feeling, quite fresh, and even possessing, for such a thing, evidence of talent in that way, then would the critic's lash have smitten him; but now, he is safely screened by the borrowed plumage of Sansovino.*

Great and glorious is our age of fine art! Another grand work, of the same genus, will shortly rise to establish our architectural fame. The committee of the Army and Navy Club, after considerable labour and discussion, evincing an extraordinary knowledge of fine art, as well as constructive skill, and after having in the most disinterested manner awarded two premiums for designs merely for the pleasure of seeing them hang up in their rooms,—have at length determined, it seems, that their building shall be a copy of a palazzo by Sansovino!—a copy, on which will have been employed the joint intellect of two architects. The club have, however, opened our eyes to one thing—it being now made evident that they acted without much discernment in the first instance, bestowing their premiums upon two designs, both which they have thought proper to dismiss, passing over altogether the design which they have since discovered to be so excellent that they have actually adopted it for execution. Not that the club shewed themselves much more blind than most other folks —since none of those who spoke of the exhibited designs bestowed any notice on No. 46, Messrs. Parnell and Smith's, except to inform us that Count D'Orsay was somewhat unaccountably mixed up with it. Perhaps some passed it by without remark, because the first glance satisfied them as to what it was—a leaf stolen out of Sansovino. Nevertheless, after the *turn* which matters have now taken, it will be well to shew us its shape and likeness.

ANTI COPYISM.

THE WINDOW TAX AND TAX ON BRICK.

BOTH HEALTH-OF-TOWNS-QUESTIONS IN THE FORTHCOMING PARLIAMENT.

IT so happens that those two taxes which are so highly obnoxious to a free disposal of architectural and constructive detail for the promotion of the health of towns, are equally obnoxious to the same free disposal of detail for the promotion of architectural beauty in building itself, and hence most injurious to that and to the expansion of the best interests of both the science of architecture and the art of building in general. It would become none so well, therefore, as architects and builders, to take the initiative in some specific and determined measure for the purpose of sweeping away these obnoxious taxes at once, during the *highly opportune moment* of time when preliminary measures are about to be taken for the cleansing of the national Augean stable, and the foundation and establishment of the health of towns, with which those very taxes are so inextricably involved. Inextricably, we maintain, for how can the health of towns be freely and unobstructedly promoted while such hindrances to those very details most necessary, most essential, to its promotion and establishment are permitted to stop up the way. And we are very much mistaken indeed if the Government do not already perceive the gross inconsistency of upholding such taxes at the very moment that they are clearing the way for the health of the community; and that they are therefore quite resigned, *if strenuously pushed*, to take the only means of gracefully backing out of such a dilemma by yielding the point at once. They cannot pretend to any thing like sincerity in the promotion of sanatory laws unless they do. And now, therefore, is the time to take the initiative in thus bringing a not by any means new grievance, or even new movement, into *some one practical shape*.

To that end a correspondent of our own, "A. G.," proposes that AN ASSOCIATION for the abolition of the brick and window duties be forthwith established, and that, preliminarily at least, by architects and builders, whose interests are so deeply affected, and who must of necessity be best aware of the injurious opera-

* A contemporary says of the New Carlton:—"The mixture of polished marble and dead stone, caused by the introduction of the columns, tablets, &c., of the former material, besides being unpleasant in point of colour till the London smoke shall throw its uniform tint and tone over all, seems to us a mistake as suggesting an obvious discrepancy, not to say economy. 'Cloth of frieze and cloth of gold' do not wear well together. If it requires some education (shall we say a little violence to natural taste?) to accustom the eye to the mosaic mixture of marbles in the Campanile of the *Duomo* at Florence—the Chess-board facings of the less richly varied cathedral at Monza—the Saracenic horizontal stripes of the Broletto at Como, and a thousand like examples, and these under the tempering and harmonizing influences of a climate where all bright hues are in equal measure toned by the dazzling blue above, we cannot but think that the crude contrast of materials and colours adverted to may be found harder to reconcile under our duller air; that at least for a London street-effect it is less effective than such an old-fashioned mixture of [illegible] things as [illegible] and even Marlborough House exhibit. Nevertheless, whatever be thought of the purity of taste of each one of these new club [illegible] [illegible] considered, and however we may groan over the [illegible] which has [illegible] invention, driving our architects to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]"